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PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION REPORT

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RESUPPLY ACTIVITY SOUTHERN NORTH VIETNAM

NPIC/R-22/69
MARCH 1969

GROUP 1: EXCLUDED FROM
AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING
AND DECLASSIFICATION

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INTRODUCTION

The significant increase in North Vietnamese resupply activity observed subsequent to the bombing halt of 1 November 1968 has continued through the first two weeks of [redacted] The amount of materiel observed being moved during this period is substantial. Coordinated road, rail, and water transshipment areas are well established and supplies appear to be moving freely.

SUMMARY

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[redacted] the North Vietnamese continued the large scale resupply efforts inaugurated immediately after the US bombing halt of 1 November 1968. 1/

Supplies are still moving from the north into the panhandle area of Vietnam by rail, road, and water. They are then transported through one of four major supply routes (Mu Gia Pass, Ban Karari Pass, the Demilitarized Zone, and Nape Pass) into Laos or South Vietnam (Figure 1).

1/ NPIC. R-7/69. "Logistics Activity, North Vietnam 1 November - 31 December 1968," January 1969.

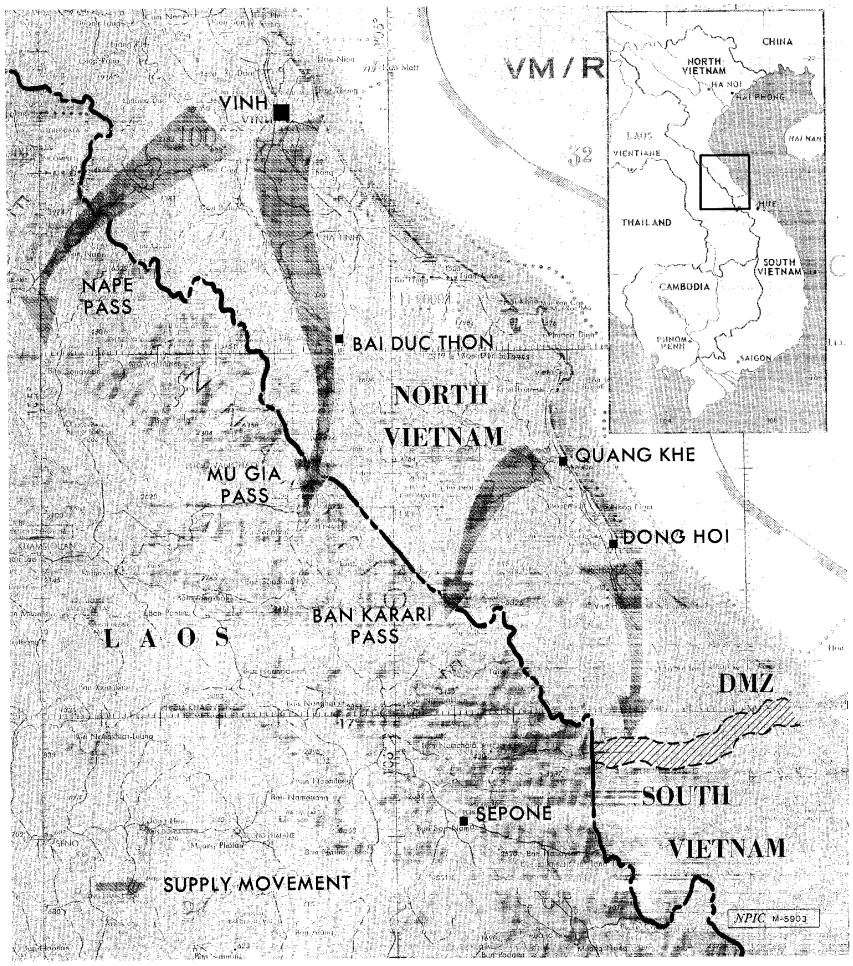

FIGURE 1. MAJOR SUPPLY ROUTES.

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Somewhat limited photographic coverage indicates that the level of resupply activity has generally remained high. Cargo trucks continue to move on the known infiltration routes, and to insure an open serviceable passage into southern Laos, the Vietnamese have reopened Route 8 through Nape Pass for the first time in several years. Conventional rolling stock is able to move from the north to Vinh; the reconstruction of the rail segment between Vinh and Dong Hoi is continuing.

Most transshipment points reactivated subsequent to 1 November 1968 remain extremely active. Only a few have been abandoned, which probably indicates an improvement in the logistics network and a resultant speedup in the movement of supplies. Photography of [redacted] also reveals a noticeable decrease in activity at some of the transshipment points associated with waterborne coastal movement. This decrease may be only temporary due to bad weather or may be an initial indication that the major resupply effort is waning and that the bulk of the supplies are now at their desired destinations.

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FIGURE 2. TRANSSHIPMENT AND STORAGE AREA, BAI DUC THON, NORTH VIETNAM.

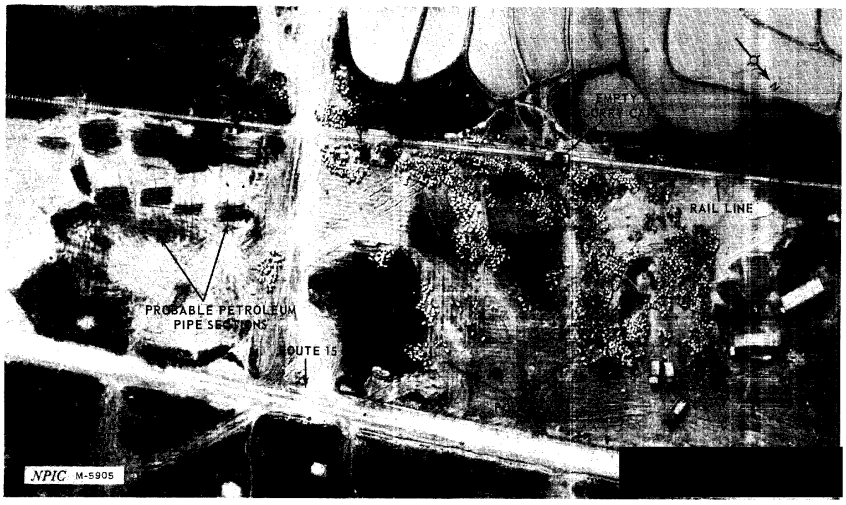

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FIGURE 3. TRANSSHIPMENT AND STORAGE AREA, BAI DUC THON, NORTH VIETNAM.

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Supply Movement Through Mu Gia Pass

Most of the supplies being moved through Mu Gia Pass have followed the water, rail, and truck logistics network from Vinh through Bai Duc Thon and then through the pass.

Improvements to the rail portion of this network are continuing. Reconstruction is underway on a rail bridge 19 nm south at Vinh (Trai Hoi Rail Bridge) and rail replacement, roadbed improvement, and rail spur construction is observed along a 17 nm segment of the rail line immediately south of the Song La Giang.

25X1D Intermittent coverage of Bai Duc Thon in [redacted] revealed a continued high level of activity, with lorry trains unloading substantial amounts of supplies for further transport by vehicle along Route 15 into Laos (Figures 2 and 3). Vehicle movement in the southern panhandle has been greatest along this route. Crates, containers, and bagged goods observed in temporary storage are apparently being classified and stored. Separate storage areas for crated supplies, bagged goods, POL drums, and petroleum pipe sections can be identified (Figure 4).

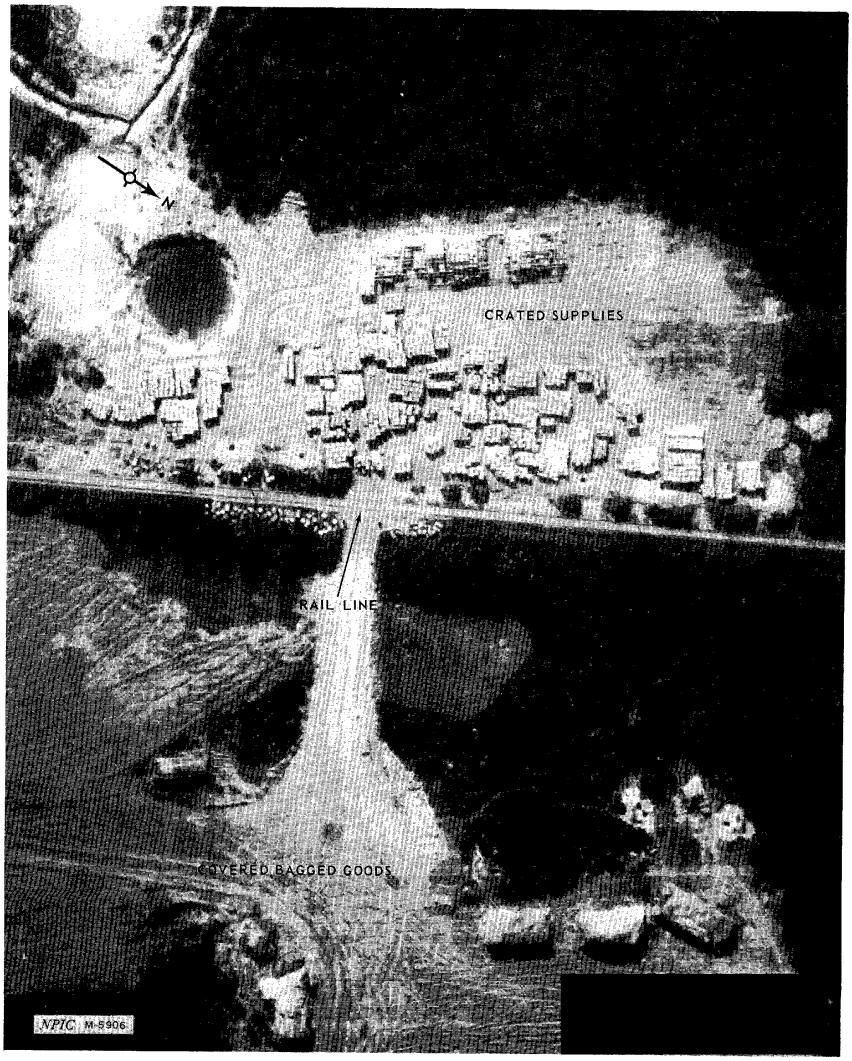

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FIGURE 4. STORAGE AREA, BAI DUC THON, NORTH VIETNAM.

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Supply Movement Through Ban Karari Pass

Supplies destined for movement through Ban Karari Pass are being shipped out of Quang Khe by vessel, and to a lesser extent by truck from Route 15 along Route 101, to the transshipment and storage areas in the vicinity of Cu Lac and Phong Nha and then over Route 137 through the pass (Figure 5).

Logistics activity at Quang Khe transshipment point has generally continued at a high level. Although the number of logistics vessels observed in the area has fluctuated and sightings have been somewhat less than in [redacted] comparative photographic coverage indicates a substantial amount of material is being moved in and out of the area. 25X1D

25X1D In [redacted] a new pier had been constructed and two were under construction. Extensive storage and transshipping were also observed (Figure 6). The piers were com-

25X1D plete by [redacted] and a decrease in activity was evident.

Recent photography has shown a substantial increase in the use of the transshipment and temporary storage facilities in the Cu Lac-Phong Nha area. At Phong Nha, located at the head of Route 137, supplies are still being stacked and covered to appear as native dwellings (Figure 7). Storage and transshipping now extend approximately 2 nautical miles (nm) along the bank of the Song Troc.

To expedite the movement of vehicles along Route 137, a vehicle maintenance area has been established midway between Phong Nha and the Laotian border (Figure 8), and continuing efforts to keep the road serviceable have been observed. Vehicle movement along Route 137 is second in volume to Route 15.

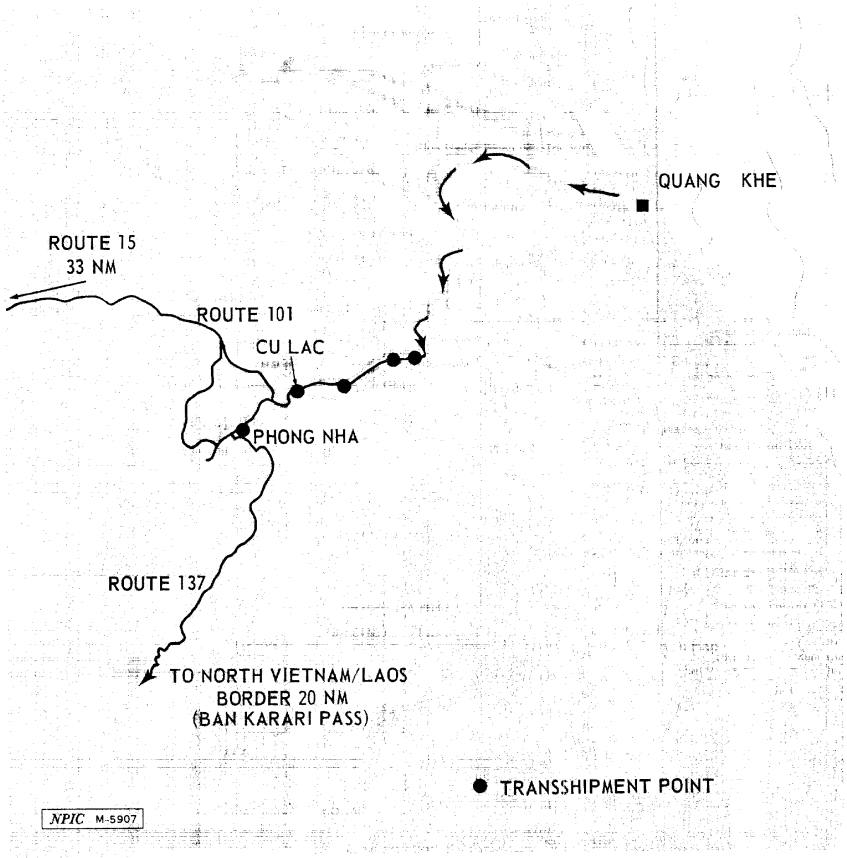

FIGURE 5. SUPPLY ROUTES TO BAN KARARI PASS.

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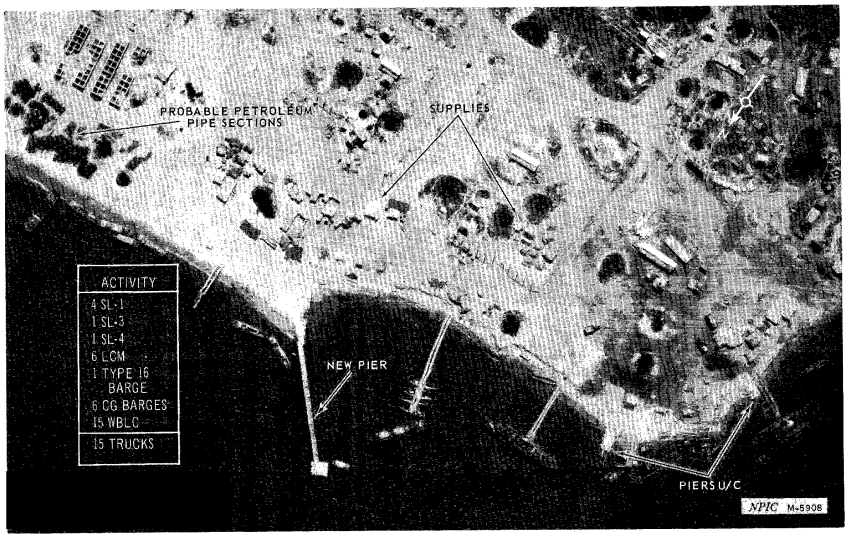

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FIGURE 6. TRANSSHIPMENT POINT, QUANG KHE, NORTH VIETNAM.

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FIGURE 7. TRANSSHIPMENT AND STORAGE AREA, PHONG NHA, NORTH VIETNAM.

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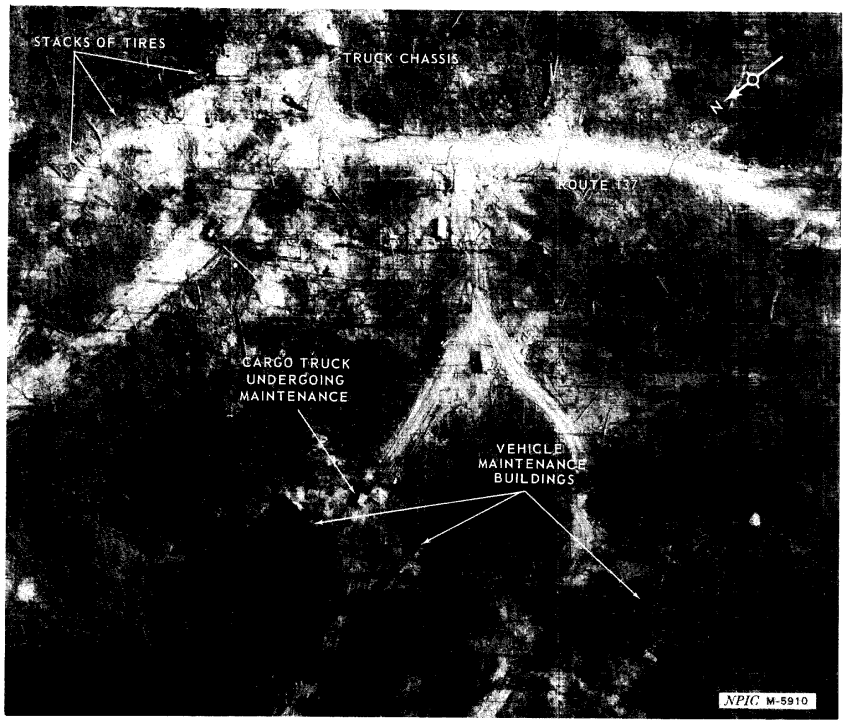

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FIGURE 8. VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AREA, ROUTE 137, NORTH VIETNAM.

Supply Movement Through the DMZ.

Supplies destined for movement through the DMZ continue to be transported through the Dong Hoi area and are handled at one of at least 12 transshipment points in the area prior to their temporary storage and eventual transport over Routes 103 and 1036 into the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and Laos (Figure 9).

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The shipment of supplies by vessel and truck into the Dong Hoi area continued at a high level during [redacted] although a noticeable decrease in logistics activity was observed at Dong Hoi on [redacted] Comparative coverage indicates that most transshipment points, such as the one at Long Dai (Figure 10), have remained active and that several transshipment points that were active during [redacted] have been abandoned.

Limited storage facilities for bulk goods and extensive storage for POL have been identified in the area between Dong Hoi and Bat Lake, indicating that some supplies are stored, at least temporarily, before movement further south. Additional storage areas are located near the junction of Routes 103 and 101 and the junction of Routes 1A and 102.

Of the routes leading into Laos or the DMZ, Route 103 appears most active, with cargo trucks moving up to a point 2.9 nm north of the northern boundary of the DMZ. From this point two heavily used trails lead south, one into the DMZ while the other disappears into a heavy tree canopy (Figure 11). Efforts to make portions of the Houei Nam Se (river) navigable to small vessels (possibly to assist in the resupply effort) have also been noted near Route 103 in the western DMZ.

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Route 1036 also is active and construction equipment and trucks have been observed along the route. It is reported that on [redacted] an effort to extend Route 1036 had begun. By [redacted] it is reported that the road had been extended approximately 3.5 nm, with its terminus now located in Laos. Photography of [redacted] has revealed a new road under construction west of Route 1036. The road is intermittently observed under construction for 5 nm and will apparently connect with Route 1036 to the northeast. The southern terminus cannot presently be determined.

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NO FOREIGN DISSEM [redacted]

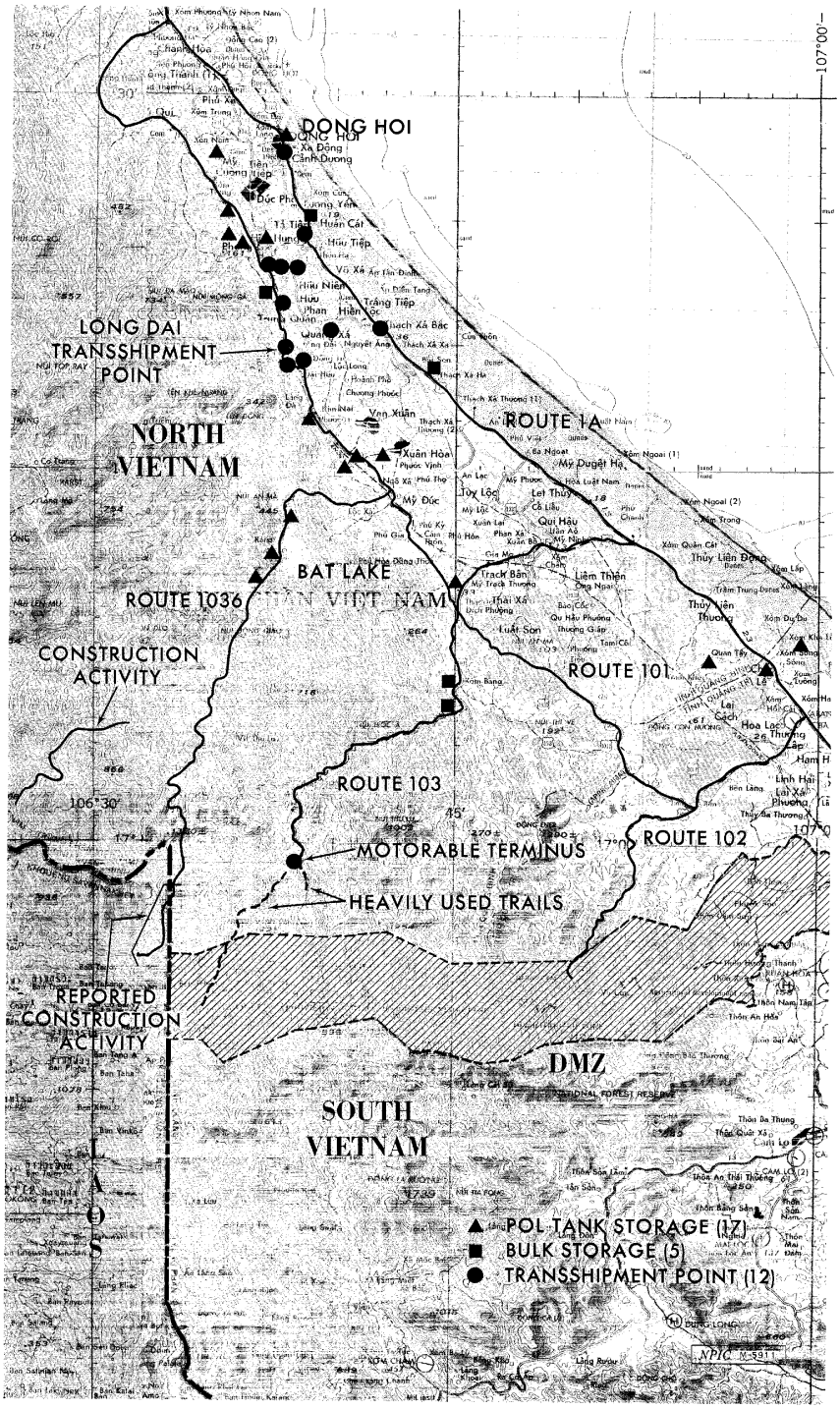

FIGURE 9. SUPPLY ROUTES TO DMZ.

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FIGURE 10. TRANSSHIPMENT POINT, LONG DAI, NORTH VIETNAM.

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FIGURE 11. TRANSSHIPMENT AREA, ROUTE 103, NORTH VIETNAM.

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Supply Movement Through Nape Pass

The North Vietnamese have reopened Laos Route 8 through the Nape Pass to Laos Route 12 for the first time in several years (Figure 12). This route will provide an alternate access route to the southern panhandle of Laos in the event the Mu Gia Pass is made unserviceable. Route 8 has recently received light to moderate usage and several destroyed trucks are observed along the route. The importance of this route to the North Vietnamese is further emphasized by the observance of a telecommunications line under construction along the northern portion of the route.

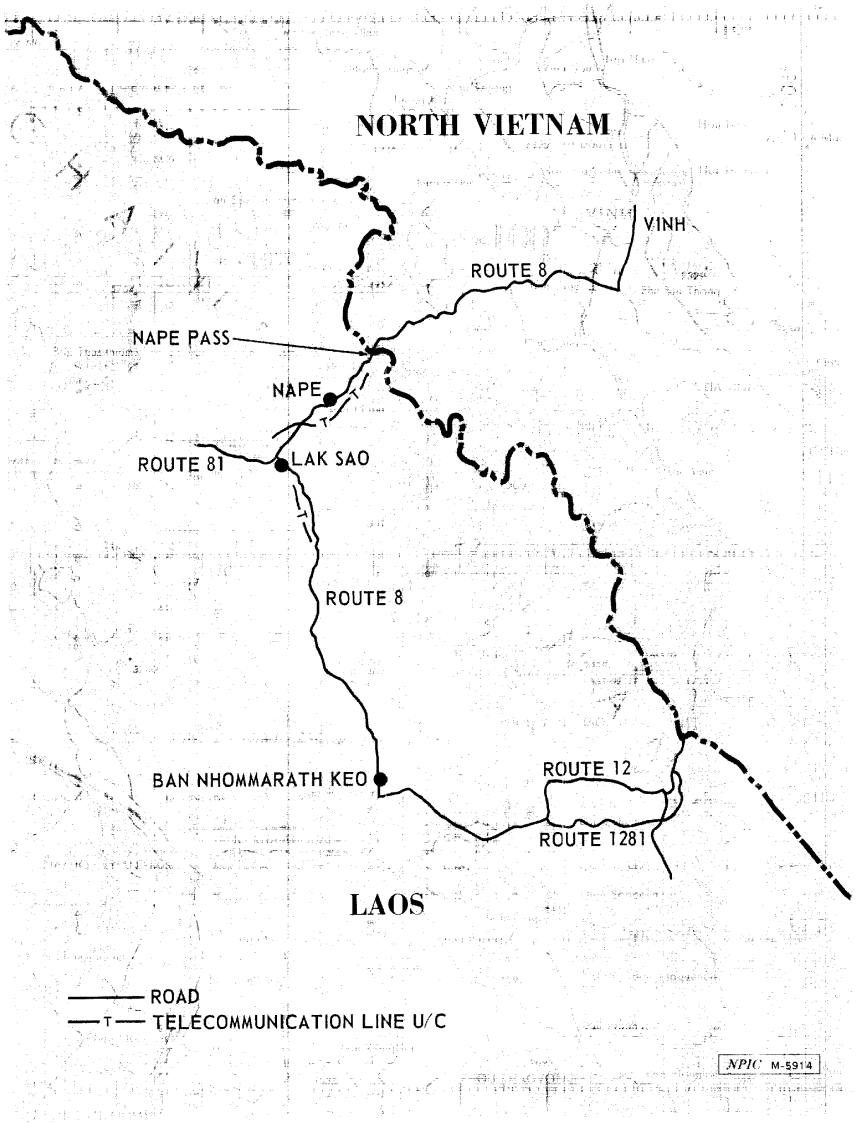

FIGURE 12. ROUTE 8 THROUGH NAPE PASS.

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REFERENCE DATA

IMAGERY

Mission	Date	Camera	Frames	Classification/Control
[redacted]				CONFIDENTIAL/No Foreign
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				CONFIDENTIAL
				CONFIDENTIAL
				CONFIDENTIAL

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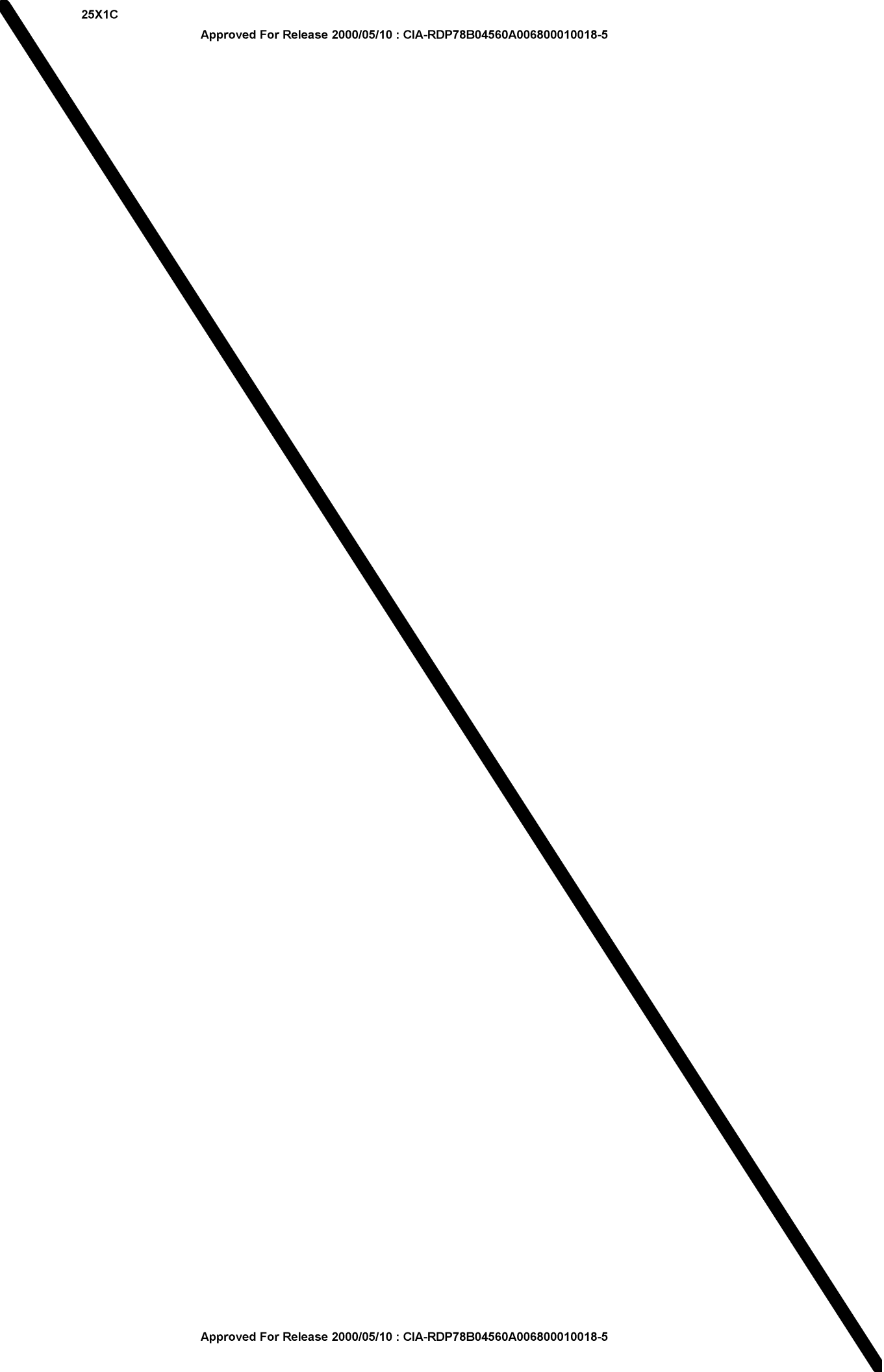

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